

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-03 CIAE-00 NSC-05

NSCE-00 ACDA-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 INR-05 PRS-01

PA-01 L-01 EB-03 PM-03 /058 W

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R 131002Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 188

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

S E C R E T TUNIS 5534

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TS,AG

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN EXPLANATION TO GOT OF SECOND INTERIM AGREEMENT

1. EGYPTIAN MINSTATE FOR FONAFF MOHAMED RIYAD SAW
PRESIDENT
BOURGUIBA AND FONMIN CHATTI SEPARATELY DURING
PERIOD SEPTEMBER 9 TO 11. FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF RIYAD'S
TALKS IS FROM NEW EGYPTIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR FATHI
(PROTECT CAREFULLY), WHO ACCOMPANIED RIYAD DURING
TALKS, AS QUOTED BY RELIABLE ITALIAN DIPLOMAT. RIYAD
TOLD TUNISIANS HE WAS HERE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS CON-
CERNING AGREEMENT AND ASSURED THEM AGREEMENT HAS NO
REPEAT NO SECRET TERMS.

2. TUNISIANS SAID AGREEMENT LEAVES SYRIA EXPOSED AND
WITHOUT BENEFIT. RIYAD ASSURED THEM THAT GOE HAS SOLID
UNSPECIFIED REASONS TO EXPECT NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE
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NOVEMBER LEADING TO ISRAELI-SYRIAN AGREEMENT RE GOLAN

WITHIN TWO MONTHS. RIYAD SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVE THIS BEFORE UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN BECOMES INTENSE. RIYAD TOLD TUNISIANS FURTHER THAT EGYPTIAN-SYIRIAN MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT STANDS DESPITE SECOND INTERIM ACCORD AND, IN FACT, THAT EGYPT WILL GO TO WAR IF SYRIA IS ATTACKED.

3. GOT OBJECTED THAT PALESTINIAN QUESTION IS LEFT UNTOUCHED BY THE AGREEMENT. RIYAD JUSTIFIED THIS KSAYING EGYPT COULD NOT PRESUME TO SPEAK FOR PALESTINIANS AND DID NOT WISH, IN FACT, TO INTRODUCE SUCH A POLITICAL ELEMENT INTO WHAT NOW STANDS AS A PURELY MILITARY AGREEMENT.

4. GOT KOTED EGYPTIAN CONCESSION THAT ISREALI CARGOES MAY TRANSIT SUEZ. RIYAD SAID THIS EGYPTIAN CONCES-
SION IS MINOR TECHNICALITY SINCE ISRAEL'S REAL NEEDS ARE MET VIA EILAT AND MEDITERRANEAN PORTS. IN FACT, SAID RIYAD, AGREEMENT LIMITING ISRAELI CANAL ACCESS TO NON-MILITARY CARGOES IN THIRD-COUNTRY VESSELS IS AN IMPLICIT ISRAELI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT A STATE OF WAR STILL EXISTS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.

5. ANOTHER EGYPTIAN CONCESSION NOTED WAS UNDERTAKING NOT TO OBSTRUCT BAB-AL-MANDAB. RIYAD SAID THIS WAS HARDLY EGYPT'S PROBLEM. HE SUGGESTED ARAB STATES NEAR SOUTHERN END OF RED SEA COULD TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION SHOULD THE NEED ARISE.

6. TUNISIANS EXPRESSED CURIOSITY RE INTRODUCTION OF AMERICAN CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS IN SINAI. RIYAD TOLD THEM THIS DEVELOPMENT WAS RESULT OF EGYPTIAN INSISTENCE, AS A DEVICE TO INSURE THE ENGAGEMENT OF AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION WITH THE AGREEMENT. HE ASSURED TUNISIANS THAT THESE TECHNICIANS WOULD BE NO OBSTACLE IF NEED SHOULD ARISE FOR AN EGYPTIAN MILITARY ADVANCE IN SINAI.

7. FATHI DESCRIBED TUNISIAN REACTION TO RIYAD'S EXPLANATIONS AS RESERVED. BOURGUIBA HAD ACKNOWLEDGED
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THAT EGYPT HAD LONG SPENT ITS OWN BLOOD AND WEALTH FOR THE PALESTINIANS (IMPLYING A DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING BY BOURGUIBA OF EGYPTIAN MOTIVES IN SIGNING A NONETHELESS UNSATISFACTORY AGREEMENT). ACCORDING TO FATHI, RIYAD LEFT FOR CAIRO HAVING RECEIVED NO MORE ENCOURAGEMENT FROM GOT THAN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

8. FATHI SAID THAT HE DID NOT HAVE THE DETAILS

OF PRESIDENT ASAD'S MESSAGE TO BOUGUIBA PRESENTED SEPT 9
BY SYRIAN CHARGE HERE, BUT HE UNDERSTOOD IT FELL SHORT
OF CONDEMNATION OF THE SECOND INTERIM AGREEMENT. FATHI
BELIEVED ASAD HAD SOLICITED BOUGUIBA'S BACKING IN
POSITION THAT SYRIA MUST NOT BE ISOLATED AGAINST ISRAEL
VERY LONG; I.E., THERE MUST BE RAPID PROGRESS ON RE-
CLAIMING THE GOLAN HEIGHTS.

9. COMMENT: EMBASSY RECOGNIZES RIYAD'S STATEMENTS
ABOVE REACHED US THROUGH TWO INTERMEDIARIES AND MAY NOT
BE ENTIRELY ACCURATE.
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